

Attachment

Comments on Programs

Water Quality

- The Drinking Water Program is narrowly focused and continues to rely too heavily on improving water quality at the pumps instead of improving water quality at the tap. In defining the drinking water problem, CALFED should investigate and identify all contributions to the problem, including agricultural practices, export levels, inadequate or deteriorating distribution systems and treatment facilities. Even if CALFED chooses not to address the distribution aspect of the problem (leaving it to water agencies), it should understand the relationship of actions that it chooses to take with other aspects of the problem, so that a more comprehensive solution can be framed.
- CALFED must better define and address the potential public health impacts of water quality problems and not just the environmental impacts. It is not only the natural environment that is affected by the CALFED program; many marginal human communities will be profoundly impacted.
- Fish contamination is a major public health issue for communities in the Delta, along the Bay, and throughout the Central Valley and is not adequately addressed by program strategies and actions. CALFED's program falls short of linking its water quality actions to improve source water quality with that of the pollution and bioaccumulation problems faced by subsistence fishing communities throughout the Bay system. (See comments submitted during the EIS/EIR public comment period from Greg Karras, Communities for a Better Environment, dated September 20, 1999)
- CALFED should determine the potential water quality impacts on communities in the Bay system related to changes in flow and circulation patterns resulting from proposed CALFED actions. (See comments submitted during the EIS/EIR public comment period from Greg Karras, Communities for a Better Environment, dated September 20, 1999)
- CALFED's actions include incentives to implement best management practices in both agricultural and urban areas to reduce discharges. Community organizations are actively seeking to address water quality issues through pollution prevention, monitoring, and education activities. CALFED should seek to ensure that its program supports and coordinates its activities with such efforts. (See comments submitted during the EIS/EIR public comment period from Michael Stanley Jones, dated September 23, 1999)
- CALFED's water quality program does not adequately address the relationship between Delta water quality and groundwater quality, or the broader relationship between groundwater quality (and supply) and water supply management as it affects the Delta. Strategies to improve water quality should also include strategies to improve groundwater quality.

- CALFED's water quality program should consider the cumulative impacts of pollutants on both public and environmental health.

Ecosystem Restoration Program

- CALFED has identified changes in land-use for ecosystem restoration as having potential adverse social and economic impacts. It should continue such analysis to determine potential environmental justice impacts and develop responses to avoid or reduce such impacts.
- The ERP should demonstrate stronger commitments to and accountability mechanisms with local communities to ensure that potential adverse social and economic impacts are addressed.
- The life cycle of the threatened and endangered fisheries include watersheds throughout the Bay-Delta system as well as the Pacific. The ERP must include restoration goals and actions in a geographic range that matches the historic and current life cycle of these fisheries, including defined critical habitat in metropolitan areas such as the San Francisco Bay.

Water Use Efficiency Program

- In addition to promoting conservation practices in urban and agricultural settings, the program should recognize the linkages between pollution prevention and conservation activities and aggressively pursue pollution prevention strategies that will result in substantial water conservation as well as complementary improvements in water quality.
- The program is relies heavily upon incentives and financial supports to water agencies (both urban and rural) to implement its conservation and recycling program. Greater effort should be made to ensure the program supports broader engagement with community-based organizations. Community-based organizations have been effective actors in water conservation efforts and their inclusion would ensure achievement of the program's goals, while reaching audiences often overlooked, creating multiple environmental and water-related benefits across the Bay-Delta, and addressing a broader range of water-related problems.

Water Transfers

- The water transfer program should establish a framework for addressing, eliminating, and/or mitigating third party impacts, not just support analysis of such impacts.
- It is unclear how a market would function under the CALFED Plan. The water transfer program does not establish or support clear criteria for approving water transfers. Public rights to water must be considered as public benefits in any reallocation of water resources initiated by a transfer. The program should create clear criteria for determining potentially adverse impacts to third parties in the selling and buying communities (including the environment). While the program begins to address these criteria in terms of groundwater

impacts, it does not do so in terms of third party community impacts, primarily impacting farmworker and other rural communities of color.

- Analysis of any water transfer should consider the impacts of transfers on the buying communities as well as the selling communities: is the buyer using its existing supplies efficiently? Is the transferred water fueling suburban growth? Are the costs and benefits being shared equitably.
- Although the establishment of a publicly accessible clearinghouse for proposed transfers is a start, further acknowledgement of public rights in water is essential to evaluate whether particular transfers might benefit broader public interests. All state citizens of present as well as future generations are intended beneficiaries of the reasonable use of water in this state; they are not just incidentally affected by the actions of buying and selling contractors. Therefore, public representatives should be included in water transfer negotiations as the nature, extent and purpose of particular actions are formulated.

Watershed

We support the overall approach adopted in the Watershed Program, in particular its watershed management approach that allows for the integration and coordination of CALFED program elements, and its commitment to public outreach and participation.